

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 045634

R 040859Z MAY 76
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6983
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRAZILIA
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION NATO

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 2940

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, AO, US, PO
SUBJECT: CONSULTATIONS ON ANGOLA

REFS: (A) STATE 97817 (DTG 221722Z APR 76); (B) LISBON
2763 (DTG 281102Z APR 76)

SUMMARY: FONMIN MELO ANTUNES'S ANALYSIS OF ANGOLA
CORRESPONDS WITH OURS, ALTHOUGH HE BELIEVES CUBANS
WISH TO WITHDRAW. NITO ALVES IS, IN HIS JUDGMENT,
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BACKED MORE BY USSR THAN BY CUBA. PRO-SOVIET GROUP

HAS JOINED FORCES WITH EXTREME LEFT, WHICH IN TURN LINKED WITH PORTUGUESE EXTREME LEFT. DURING PRESENT CRISIS BETWEEN GOP AND RPN ANTUNES HAS MANEUVERED CAUTIOUSLY TO AVOID A RUPTURE. GOP POLICY IS BASED ON MAINTAINING A BRIDGE FOR THE WEST TO ANGOLA. ANTUNES ENCOURAGES U.S. TO MAINTAIN INFORMAL CONTACTS AND MAKE POSITIVE GESTURES DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE TRUE INDEPENDENCE. WHILE NOTHING SPECTACULAR WILL RESULT, SUCH GESTURES WILL HAVE AN IMPACT AND TIE IN NICELY WITH SECRETARY'S LUSAKA DECLARATION. END SUMMARY.

1. DRAWING ON REFTEL (A) I REVIEWED ANGOLAN DEVELOPMENTS WITH FONMIN MELO ANTUNES ON MAY 3. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE ANTUNES MAINTAINS HIS OWN MPLA CONTACTS AND DEALS PERSONALLY WITH ANGOLAN RELATIONS. HE AND VITOR CRESPO (REFTEL B) COORDINATE CLOSELY, BUT THE BUREAUCRACY GENERALLY HAS LITTLE IDEA WHAT EITHER OF THEM IS DOING.

2. USSR ELEMENTS IN ASCENDENCY: ANTUNES SAID THERE WAS A "CONVERGENCE" BETWEEN OUR ANALYSIS AND HIS. THE SITUATION HAD WORSENED WITH THE INCREASED INFLUENCE OF NITO ALVES AND ELEMENTS LINKED TO HIM. ALVES WAS BACKED, IT APPEARED, MORE BY THE USSR THAN BY CUBA.

3. CUBAN DESIRE TO WITHDRAW: IN THIS CONNECTION ANTUNES SAID HE SAW DEVELOPING A CERTAIN "AUTONOMY" BETWEEN THE POSITIONS OF THE USSR AND CUBA. THE USSR WAS PUSHING HARD TO INCREASE ITS INFLUENCE, BUT CUBA DID NOT SEEM TO OPERATE "WITH THE SAME ALIGNMENT." CUBA WAS INTERESTED IN WITHDRAWING AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE, ANTUNES SAID. THEY ARE ENCOUNTERING SOME DIFFICULTY IN DOING THIS, OF COURSE, SINCE CERTAIN MPLA ELEMENTS ARE HIGHLY DEPENDENT ON CUBAN PRESENCE.

4. INTERNAL DISPUTE: ANTUNES DESCRIBED THE INTERNAL ANGOLAN SITUATION AS "WORRISOME." ONE CURRENT FAVORED TRUE NON-ALIGNMENT WITH A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF INDEPENDENCE FROM THE USSR AND CUBA. THIS CURRENT, "WHICH IS IN VERY DEEP TROUBLE," WOULD ESTABLISH GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE WEST AND, IN PARTICULAR, PORTUGAL. THE SOVIET-LINING ELEMENTS HAD TEAMED UP WITH THE EXTREME LEFT TO BRING ABOUT THE ARREST OF THE MORE MODERATE FORCES. HE NOTED THAT THE EXTREME LEFT HAD LINKS WITH THE PORTUGUESE EXTREME LEFT (HE LATER IDENTIFIED THIS AS UDP, PORTUGAL'S LEADING ULTRA-LEFT PARTY). THE RESULT WAS THAT NETO WAS ENTERING A DIFFICULT PERIOD IN WHICH HE WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH BOTH A PRO-USSR GROUP

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AND A PRO-CHINESE ULTRA LEFT FACTION.

4. GOP POLICY: IN THIS SITUATION ANTUNES THOUGHT IT WAS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT FOR PORTUGAL TO PRESERVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA IN ORDER TO "KEEP RESPONSIBLE ELEMENTS ALIVE." AN AVENUE ALSO HAD TO BE MAINTAINED TO FACILITATE THE EVENTUAL ESTABLISHMENT OF TIES WITH THE WEST, INCLUDING THE U.S. THE PRESENT CRISIS BETWEEN THE GOP AND ANGOLA WAS DIFFICULT AND COMPLEX, BUT THE WORST WAS NOW OVER. THE GOP HAD MANEUVERED CAUTIOUSLY TO AVOID A RUPTURE. FUTURE GOP POLICY WILL CONTINUE TO BE BASED ON A DESIRE TO MAINTAIN A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE GOP AND THE RPA. THE GOP STILL INTENDED TO SEND AN AMBASSADOR TO ANGOLA (SECRETARY OF STATE MEDEIROS FERREIRA TOLD ME OVER WEEKEND THAT AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN SELECTED AND AGREEMENT REQUESTED, BUT NO ANSWER HAD BEEN FORTHCOMING).

5. WESTERN CONTACTS: AS FAR AS IDEAS ON WHAT THE WEST, IN PARTICULAR THE U.S., MIGHT DO, ANTUNES

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 040859Z MAY 76
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
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AMEMBASSY BRAZILIA
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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 LISBON 2940

EXDIS

THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO CONTINUE OUR INFORMAL CONTACTS. THROUGH THESE CONTACTS WE COULD DEMONSTRATE THE INTEREST OF THE U.S. IN AN INDEPENDENT ANGOLA. A HOSTILE ATTITUDE WOULD ONLY AROUSE ANTAGONISM AND PUSH THE MPLA FACTIONS CLOSER TOGETHER.

6. POSITIVE GESTURES: ANTUNES RECOGNIZED THE U.S. COULD NOT DO ANYTHING SPECTACULAR RIGHT NOW. SPECTACULAR MOVES WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. BUT HE AGAIN URGED THAT WE DO NOT SHUT THE DOOR TO ANGOLA,
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AND THAT WE SHOW SOME POSITIVE GESTURES THAT WOULD ENCOURAGE POTENTIAL PRO-WESTERN GROUPS. HE THOUGHT USG PRESSURE ON GULF OIL TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE RPA MIGHT BE ONE SUCH GESTURE. HE COULD NOT THINK OF ANY OTHERS BUT THERE MIGHT BE SOME NEGOTIATIONS IN WHICH THE DISCREET INTERVENTION OF USG WOULD BE HELPFUL. HE THOUGHT SUCH GESTURES WOULD BE PARTICULARLY APPROPRIATE IN LIGHT OF USG'S NEW AFRICAN POLICY AS ELABORATE IN THE SECRETARY'S LUSAKA SPEECH.

7. THE FUTURE: AS FAR AS PORTUGAL IS CONCERNED HE PLANNED TO CONTINUE HIS PRESENT EFFORTS. IT HAD TURNED OUT TO BE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAT HE HAD THOUGHT TO WEAKEN THE USSR FACTION, BUT HE INTENDED TO CONTINUE TO TRY TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE ANGOLANS THE VALUE OF DIVERSITY IN THEIR FOREIGN RELATIONS.

8. COMMENT: ANTUNES HAS BEEN WORKING VIRTUALLY FULL TIME ON ANGOLA FOR THE PAST WEEK. HE IS IN TOUCH WITH THE CUBANS HERE AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME OF HIS INFORMATION ON CUBAN ATTITUDES IS COMING DIRECTLY FROM THEM. HE TOLD THE SWEDISH EMBASSY THAT CUBAN VICE PRIME MINISTER FOR FOREIGN RELATIONS CARLOS RODRIGUES HAD TOLD HIM DURING A REFUELING STOP HERE TWO WEEKS AGO THAT (A) THE CUBANS WOULD WITHDRAW FROM ANGOLA BUT NOT AS FAST AS THEY WENT IN AND (B) THE CUBANS HAD NO INTENTION OF ATTACKING NAMIBIA.

9. ANTUNES SPECULATED THAT THE CUBAN "DESIRE TO WITHDRAW" FROM ANGOLA STEMS NOT ONLY FROM INTERNAL REASONS BUT ALSO FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COMPLICATIONS CAUSED BY CUBAN PRESENCE. AT THE SAME TIME HE THOUGHT THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD WANT THE CUBANS TO REMAIN TO AVOID BECOMING TOO EXPOSED.

10. ANTUNES'S COMMENTS ABOUT FAR LEFT ELEMENTS IN ANGOLA ALIGNED WITH THE SOVIETS HAVING LINKS HERE WITH THE UDP SEEMS STRANGE. ALTHOUGH ANTI-WEST THE UDP IS ALSO ANTI-SOVIET. NOR IS IT A MAOIST PARTY. IT IS, HOWEVER, PRAGMATIC IN ITS APPROACH AND IT MAY SEE AN ALIGNMENT WITH THE MOST RADICAL ANGOLAN
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ELEMENTS AS A WAY OF PRESENTING ITSELF HERE AS AN ALTERNATIVE INTERLOCUTOR TO THE PCP WHEN THE GOP FINDS INCREASINGLY IT MUST DEAL WITH THE RADICAL FACTION.
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